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INFO RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE
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NSC FOR ABRAMS
CMC WASHINGTON DC FOR POLAD

JERUSALEM ALSO FOR ICD
LONDON FOR HKANONA AND POL - TSOU
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SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (04/30): "DISAPPOINTMENT AND
PESSIMISM" OVER BUSH-ABBAS MEETING OUTCOME

Main Stories:

Photos of Palestinian Premier Fayyad's tour of the separation barrier and villages affected by the structure dominate coverage on the front pages of Al-Ayyam and Al-Hayat Al-Jadida. Fayyad explained that the purpose of his tour was to inspect the effects of the "wall" and related land confiscations on agricultural villages northwest of Jerusalem. According to the dailies, Fayyad stated that, "our olive oil's roots are deeper than the foundation of the discrimination wall." Without giving detail, he highlighted that several mechanisms and projects will shortly be implemented to promote the "economic stability of the Palestinian people."

According to the lead story in Al-Quds, chief Palestinian negotiator Ahmad Quray refused, "with anger" an Israeli map showing possible Israeli and Palestinian borders under of a final agreement. The map, presented recently by Israeli Foreign Minister Livni, indicated "total control" of Israel over major West Bank settlements, Jerusalem and the Jordan valley, the paper reports. Quray asked Quartet envoy Tony Blair to "intervene effectively" to prevent Israel from destroying the peace process, the paper further notes. Meanwhile, the dailies also report that President Bush is very optimistic about the possibility of reaching a peace agreement in the Middle East before the end of his term, picking up on comments made by Bush in an April 29 White House press conference.

The situation in Gaza attracts front page coverage in all dailies. Al-Quds reports that Israeli forces pulled out of the northern Gaza Strip on the morning of April 29, leaving behind "one dead, many wounded and enormous property damage." Israeli forces hit the

electricity generator in the northern community of Beit Hanoun, leaving 200,000 Palestinians in darkness and threatening an "environmental and health catastrophe," the paper continued. Related coverage in the dailies highlights Egypt's efforts to forge a united Palestinian position regarding a truce with Israel. Al-Quds quotes Israeli Defense Minister Barak stating that, "it is not the appropriate time for a truce or cease fire." Another Al Quds report runs Israeli intelligence warnings of Hamas plans to conduct a "dangerous operation" during the celebrations marking the independence of Israel.

An exclusive interview with US Consul General Jake Waller appears on Al-Ayyam's front page under the headline, "The American Consul to Al-Ayyam: We will not surprise Palestinians and Israelis with any proposals to push the peace process forward." The Consul General added, "Settlement activities should stop, including natural growth expansion."

According to Al-Quds daily Palestinian security officials have been coordinating with Israeli security officials on the deployment of Palestinian security forces to the West Bank city of Jenin. According to the coverage, these groups have been trained to "enhance security and law" in Jenin.

BLOCK QUOTES:

1. Official daily Al-Hayat Al-Jadida carries an op-ed entitled, "Resistance and the Evolution of Peace ideas" (4/30): "... lately, [there has been] disappointment and pessimism expressed over the outcomes of the meeting between [Palestinian] President Abbas and the President of the U.S. George Bush that did not even enable Abbas

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to return with a [draft] map of a Palestinian state in his diplomatic bag. It is not acceptable to continue to think that taking the road of peaceful resistance through mere regional and international conferences will... [achieve] our national goals... [We should not believe either that a solution] will be presented on a plate of gold at the negotiation table. We realize that conducting our struggle through peaceful means, by following established rules and laws... requires determination, wisdom, patience and a firm belief in the rights of our people... whoever thinks that the emperor of the twentieth century, Bush, is able to solve this issue merely because he expressed his two-state vision is mistaken..."

2. Independent Al-Ayyam runs an op-ed by veteran columnist Hani Habib entitled, "Troublemakers in Cairo!" (4/30): "...according to the Israeli version of truce [negotiations with Palestinians], sources in [Israeli Premier] Olmert's Government point to the truce failure as being largely due to the Palestinian Authority's inability to control Palestinian factions and the disagreement among these [Palestinian] parties regarding the conditions of the truce... Israel is in need of a truce, regardless of its current refusal. The Jewish state wants its upcoming month-long independence celebrations to go off peacefully, under a truce with the Palestinian side, especially since these celebrations will be attended by top leaders from all over the world, chief among them, the American President George Bush... And Israel does not want anyone distracting attention away from these celebrations."

WALLER